

## CUBA GROWS RICH DESPITE DISASTER

Revolution and Cyclone Do  
Not Stop Progress.

### CUSTOMS RECEIPTS PILE UP

Agricultural, Mineral, and Commercial Development of the Island Is the Wonder of Nations—America Furnishes Capital and Takes Products of Pearl of the Antillas.

The following article on Cuba and its commerce and industry was specially prepared for The Washington Herald under the supervision of John Barrett, director of the Bureau of American Republics, from data contained in the library of the bureau:

Cuba, geographically and politically, is our nearest neighbor among the republics constituting the international union. The island republic was next to the last to become a member of the union, Panama having entered in 1905.

It is worth considering both the geographic and commercial conditions, for a greater intimacy with Cuba will encourage closer relations in every way. Cuba is the largest, most populous, and westernmost of the Greater Antilles. It is shaped like a bow, with the convexity toward the north, the island itself lying wholly within the tropics. It is about 160 miles from Florida, 50 miles from Haiti to the east, 85 miles from Jamaica to the south, and 130 miles from Yucatan, in Mexico, to the west. Its length is 1,000 miles, measured from Cape San Antonio to Cape Mais at the east. Its width varies from 25 to 160 miles.

### Its History Well Known.

The earlier history of the island is so well known that it would be vain to repeat it here, but it is well worth stating that the economic condition of Cuba was very satisfactory for the year 1907, during which great progress was made in industrial development. This is a surprising and encouraging result, because it was generally feared that the revolution had destroyed the financial credit of the island, while it was believed that the long-continued drought had greatly injured the cane, tobacco, fruit, and vegetable crops.

A cyclone devastated the island during the latter part of the year, and this was thought to have completed the injury to the cane and tobacco crop still remaining after the drought. It was expected, too, that the receipts from customs would diminish, and the fear was general that the revenues of the government would not be sufficient to meet the obligations and expenses.

The outcome was quite the reverse of this prophecy. The island produced more sugar in 1907 than ever before in its history. The tobacco crop was short, but superior in quality, and commanded the highest price in the history of the industry in the island. The fruit and vegetable crops were large and showed a gratifying increase in acreage over previous years, and although the output of these commodities was high and gratifying to producers.

### Customs Show Increase.

The customs receipts were in excess of that of any preceding year, and the condition of the treasury continued excellent. Taking into consideration that this showing is for a year immediately following a drought, a revolution, and a cyclone, and includes a period of panic and world-wide disturbance in business and finance, of strikes and lockouts throughout the island that paralyzed for months the cigar-making and building industries and otherwise interfered with commerce, some idea is obtained of the wonderful richness and recuperative power of the island.

Examining this year's history somewhat more in detail, it is seen that the revenues from all sources for the fiscal year 1907-8 will aggregate \$25,500,000. The budget for the ordinary expenses of the government includes items to the total of \$23,200,000, but the fiscal revenues of the republic collected during the calendar year amounted to \$23,137,827.29, an increase over that of 1906 of \$1,200,000, and the net savings to the government will be a handsome sum of \$2,300,000. The customs revenue in 1907 amounted to \$23,136,000, of which \$20,000,000 came from the port of Havana.

The total foreign commerce of the republic for the year was \$26,520,000, imports being \$18,000,000 and exports \$8,520,000, a remarkable balance for any country. Of the total imports the United States furnished 61 per cent, while 87.2 per cent of exports came to the United States. Of the exports to the United States the leading articles are sugar, tobacco in all forms, iron ore, and bananas. What Cuba seemed to need most from other countries was wheat flour, hard coal, lumber, corn, pipes and fittings, cotton, clothing, passenger and freight cars, pork, furniture, steam engines and parts, wire, hams, and hardware. United States imports from Cuba for the fiscal year 1907 show an increase of about 50 per cent over those of 1907, while exports to Cuba have advanced 125 per cent in the mean time.

### Sugar Crop 1,150,000 Tons.

The sugar crop for 1908 is estimated at 1,150,000 tons, and practically all of it goes to the United States. Of the Cuban sugar plantations (meaning those producing sugar and not cane alone), 35 belong to Americans, 75 to Europeans, 74 to Cubans, the Americans having gained 5 and Cubans 4, while Europeans lost 6. Tobacco production equaled 440,000 boxes, or nearly double that of the preceding year, and the value amounted to \$2,345,548. Of this \$2,345,548 were exported, the rest being accounted for by native consumption. Cuban manufacturers claim that they are compelled by the demand for Havana tobacco to import large quantities from other countries, which they make over into a so-called native product, but the government is trying to prevent this fraud, and has levied an import duty of \$7.50 a kilogram (equals 2.20 pounds) on foreign tobacco.

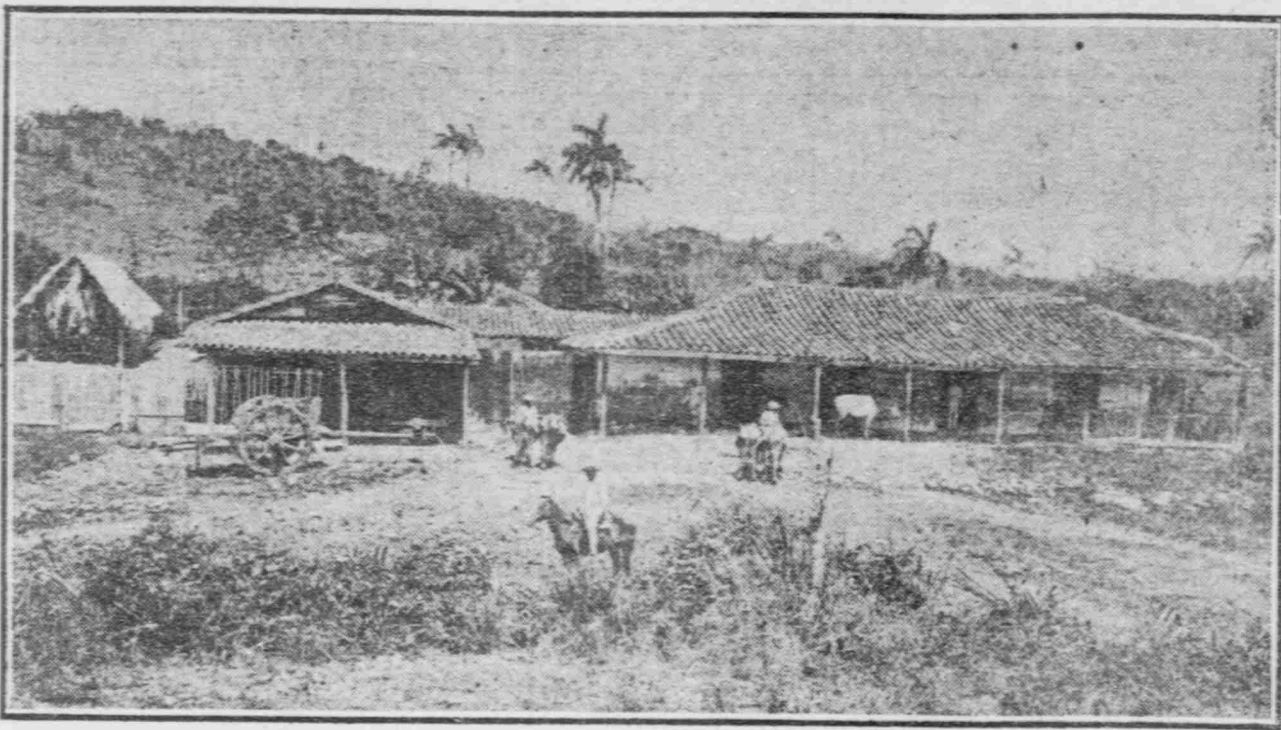
### Iron Ore 75,000,000 Tons.

Iron ore is one of Cuba's best resources. The Bethlehem Steel Company has recently acquired large deposits near Santiago, which, according to the reports of engineers, will yield 75,000,000 tons. This ore contains 2 per cent nickel and 1 per cent chromium. The discovery of this tract is regarded by experts to be one of the most important in recent years. The island contains about 2,000,000 head of cattle, 500,000 horses, 50,000 mules, and live stock breeding is becoming popular. The quantity has been increased within recent years by importation from Venezuela and Mexico, but a law has, having for its purpose the development of the quality, permits duty free the importation of female sheep and cattle of specified breeds.

### Seven Cases of Fever.

During the year only seven cases of yellow fever are reported for the city of Havana, and 161 for the rest of the

## PLANTATION SCENE NEAR CIENFUEGOS.



WEIGHING SUGAR CANE.

island, and every effort is made by the national and district health authorities to exterminate the source of disease. Indirectly, results of this kind are obtained as a consequence of the extensive public improvements projected by the government.

Road building, water and sewer systems for towns and cities, harbor construction, lighthouses and similar modernizing efforts already call for the appropriation of public funds to the amount



PINEAPPLE PLANT.

of \$1,000,000, and quite separate from these is the important work of paving and sewerage of the city of Havana, which will take six years, and when completed will have cost altogether \$12,000,000. Macadam roads to supplement the incense of the city of Havana, which the island are projected; one highway to run east and west through the center of the island, with six branch roads north and south, one each to reach the harbors of the six provinces into which Cuba is divided.

### MIGHT SELL MORE COFFEE.

Good Market for the Product in Far-off Morocco.

It seems like a roundabout course for trade to take but consumers of coffee in Morocco get their supplies through intermediaries of France, Germany, England and everybody except the United States. The coffee they use is grown in South America, and Vice Consul George E. Holt, of Tangier, is of the opinion that America ought to take the lead in the business of supplying Morocco with coffee. He says:

In 1906 the total amount of coffee consumed in Tangier and vicinity was 2,381 bags of 133 and 230 pounds each, valued at \$5,885. Exact figures for 1907 are not yet obtainable, but they will certainly exceed those of 1906. The coffee consumed in all Morocco will reach probably \$300,000 per annum.

The greater part of this coffee comes from South America, but passes through the hands of the middleman of France, Germany, England, Spain, Belgium, Austria—any one except the United States jobbers who might be expected to handle it, because they are the logical connecting link between South America and Gibraltar. In the export of coffee to Tangier, and the same holds true of the other Moroccan ports, the various nations rank as follows: France, Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Belgium, Spain, and Italy. France has about 60 per cent of the total trade, and is followed by Germany with about 10 per cent.

There would seem to be a field here not only for the more expensive grades of American coffee, but more especially for the cheaper grades, such as the package coffee which retails in the States at 25 cents for three pounds and has the advantage of being roasted and ground, and which is really superior to most of the coffee sold here at 20 cents or 25 cents per pound.

### Monroe Street House Sold.

Willie Gibbs & Daniels have sold for Charles W. King, Jr., the three-story residence at 1537 Monroe street northwest, on the north side, east of Sixteenth street. The house is brick, has seven rooms, hot-water heat, and is entirely modern. It occupies a lot 13 feet front by a depth of 120 feet to a 34-foot alley. It is the purpose of the purchaser, Irwin F. Humphrey, to occupy the premises as his residence. It is understood that \$6,500 was paid for the property.

## SHELL NECKLACES IN VOGUE MIGHT SELL IT IN CHINA

How Industry Is Carried on in Tasmania.

Children and Women Collect the Shells and Sell Them for Charity.

There seems to be growing demand for shell necklaces in the United States, and more than \$300,000 worth of them were imported last year from Australia. Consul Henry D. Baker writes from Hobart, Tasmania, about the traffic in seashells used for the purpose as follows:

The invoice of shell necklaces exported from Hobart to the United States for the year 1907 amounted to \$3,085. The shells which are used for the stringing of necklaces for this export trade are known locally as the "mariners' shell," of which there is a green and a blue variety of many sizes, varying from about one-fourth inch to one-half inch long, the width being about half the length and the shape that of a cornucopia. They are found among the seaweed at low tide, around the south and east coasts of Tasmania, and among the Fureaux group of islands in Bass Strait to the northeast of Tasmania.

The shells, to have any value, must not be taken dead, but while the fish within them is alive, otherwise they have no luster. After being taken from the seaweed they are exposed to the sunlight and atmosphere for several months, and the fish eaten out of them by flies and ants; after which they are immersed for further cleansing in hydrochloric acid, after which treatment their appearance is quite lustrous, and shows many of the prismatic colors. Some of them are strung in this natural state, while others are dyed pink, light or dark blue, green, and yellow. After stringing, they sell at retail in Hobart for about 60 cents a necklace, or about \$4.50 a dozen necklaces, and in still larger quantities at about \$4.50 a dozen. The sale to tourists from the mainland of Australia during the summer season is very large.

The best shells are found in the vicinity of D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Those found on the east coast of Tasmania are about the same in appearance, but are usually more easily broken than the shells of the south coast of Tasmania. Those of the Fureaux group are apparently of good quality, and when properly cleaned make very attractive necklaces. In these islands the work of gathering and stringing the shells is performed mostly by half-caste women and children. On a recent visit to this group I found a number of attractive varieties of shell necklaces which are very little known to the Hobart trade. They were made up from shells known locally as "penguins," "toothies," "cats' teeth," "rice" shells, "feather" shells, and "painted ladies."

The half-caste children at Cape Barrer Island were contributing quite a number of these interesting varieties while I was there, to be sold for the benefit of the children's hospital at Launceston, Tasmania. Hobart firms which export shell necklaces to the United States are also importers to a smaller extent of shell and mobile ornaments from the same American firms which buy the necklaces, pearls, and shells being the most common article of import. The cities of San Francisco and Vancouver, British Columbia, furnish for the tourists local supplies of shell and mobile ornaments, and the latter are made up from polished Japanese and Chinese pebbles, to which is usually attached a spangle—the heart shape of the island of Tasmania. It is said that these bracelets are the work of Japanese in these two cities.

Pacific Coast Shellfish Much Prized There.

Abalone Considered a Delicacy by Rich Persons in Celestial Empire.

In the waters of the Pacific Ocean near the coast of California a curious shellfish abounds, which is used extensively by the Chinese for food. Properly cooked, this crustacean is a delicious dish, and the better class of Chinese prize it highly.

Vice Consul E. C. Baker, of Amoy, calls attention to the demand for the shellfish, which is called "awabi" in China, and suggests that it would be wise for Americans to introduce the product from the Pacific Coast, properly canned, in the Chinese market. He says:

No attempt, as far as this consulate can ascertain, has been made to introduce this American product here, though large quantities of abalone from Japan are now sold in China under the name "awabi." It abounds in Japanese waters, and its use by the Chinese as a foodstuff dates from time immemorial.

There is an unlimited market for the prepared product in China, for awabi now constitutes one of the most delicate dishes of the better class of Chinese. Its demand is constant throughout the year and its use universal throughout the empire.

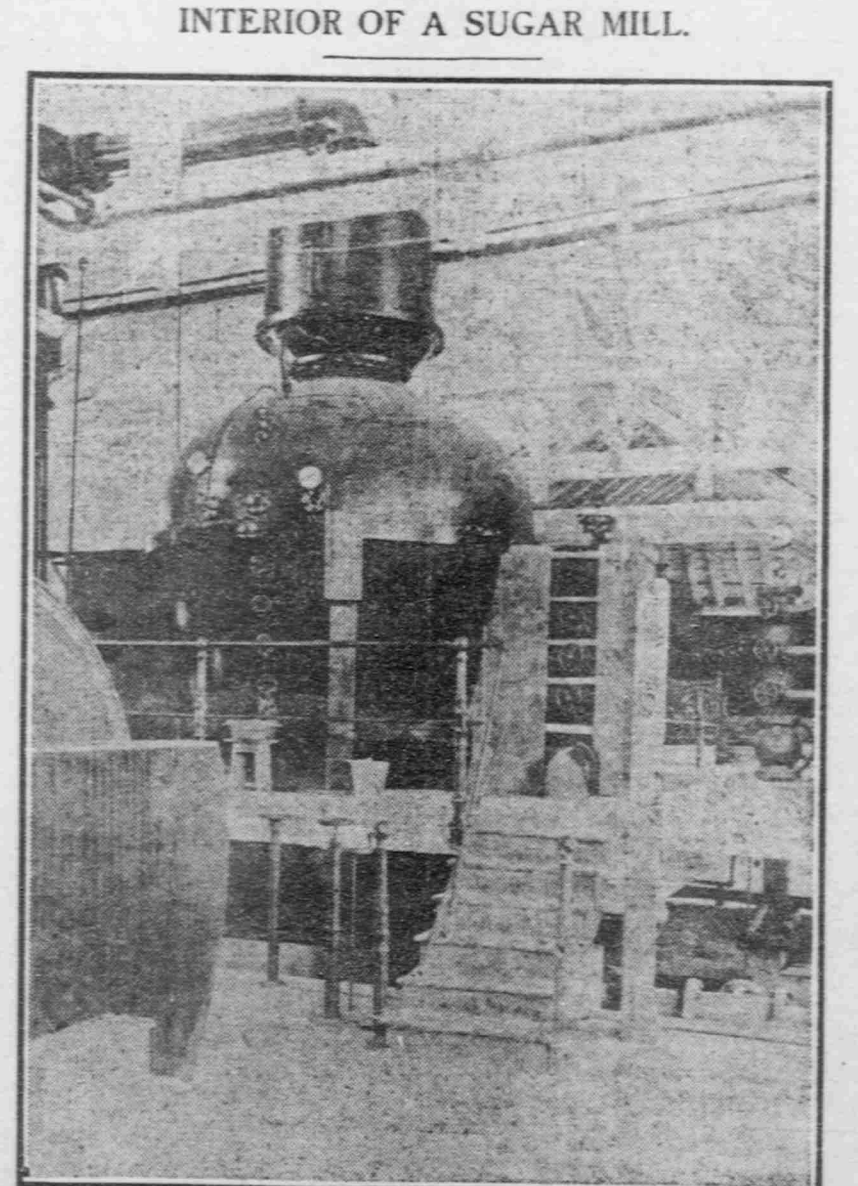
Since the introduction of the canned abalone in comparatively recent years, there seems to be a growing demand in favor of the canned instead of the dried product, both coming chiefly from Japan and the Looche Islands. The import duty on awabi in bulk is 1.5 taikwan or custom trade per piece (12 1/2 pounds), or \$3 cents gold per hundredweight. The importation into Amoy amounted to 41,333 pounds in 1907, against 41,336 pounds in 1906 and 52,337 pounds in 1905.

The canned abalone sells in the local market at \$12 Mexican (\$1 Mexican equals 50 cents gold) per case of forty-eight cans, or \$3 Mexican per dozen, each can containing one large abalone or two smaller ones, while the retail price averages about 25 cents Mexican per can. The dried abalone sells at about \$2.20 Mexican per catty (one and one-third pounds), or 60 cents gold per pound, and its value varies according to the freshness of the prepared product, the salty ones being in disfavor with the Chinese.

The Japanese product now controls the market, although some Australian ones are being introduced here, but they are not yet popular and can hardly compete successfully with the Japanese. The price for this abalone (Australian) is only about 25 cents gold per pound.

The dealers in Amoy are numerous, and are at present dependent upon the jobbers in Hongkong for their supplies. American dealers desirous of entering this field would do well by establishing agencies at Shanghai and Hongkong, and in places as the distributing centers. Direct shipments could easily be made from San Francisco to these ports. (A list of the principal abalone dealers at Amoy may be obtained from the Bureau of Manufacturers.)

### INTERIOR OF A SUGAR MILL.



EVAPORATION TANK AND SURROUNDING MACHINERY.

## WANT MOTOR BOATS

Americans Excel Others in  
Their Manufacture.

### FAD GROWING EVERYWHERE

Europeans Making Inquiry as to Types, Cost, and Sizes of Launches. South America and Italy Desires Them Also—Used as Life Savers on the Rugged Coast of Scotland.

While some European countries, notably France, have led the United States in the manufacture of the automobile, foreigners are far behind us in the making of steel motor boats. Lately the advantages of their use have appealed strongly to the Italians, and there is much inquiry as to types, sizes and cost of such craft from the people of that country.

Consul D. R. Burch, of Genoa, sends to Washington the following information concerning the use of motor boats, in the waters about Italy:

The motor boat of the future in Italian waters will be of steel construction, and a big business awaits the American maker of steel boats, who will meet the demands of the Italian market. This is the information that comes to this consulate as a result of a canvass of the situation in this immediate section of Italy concerning the prospects of selling American motor boats.

At present the trade in them, either Italian or foreign-built, is almost at a standstill. The two manufacturers of this section are building only upon order. These makers express the belief that the Italian market has been fully supplied, and that all of those interested in motor boats have either already made their purchases, or are awaiting the coming of a type more suitable to local conditions than those now seen on the Riviera.

This new type, according to the conditions of the dealers, familiar with the desires of the actual users, is the boat of steel. There is but one boat of steel now in use in these waters—an American craft—but the criticism is made that, while otherwise suitable, because of its superior strength to resist the often turbulent seas of the Mediterranean, its appearance is not as attractive as it might be.

### Power Boats Little Known.

The foregoing pertains to the pleasure craft, as the boat for power purposes is as yet little known in Italy. Much business might be done in the line of power boats by the American maker, who will give some study to the needs of the Italian market. There are at the present time two barges plying between Genoa and Savona, which have been fitted with motor power as auxiliary to sails, and these are reported to be giving satisfaction.

A local motor boat manufacturer, with offices in this city and an extensive plant in Varazze, solicits correspondence from American firms looking toward the opening of sales of American steel boats, and the manager of this concern is confident that some business might be done in both power and pleasure boats. This factory has constructed many of the boats now in use on the Mediterranean between Genoa and Marseille, and is at present completing two large passenger motor boats to be placed on the canals of Venice, to compete with gondolas.

### Need Agency at Havre.

Writing from Havre, Consul A. Gaulin says that American manufacturers could find a better outlet for marine motors in France if they entered the field on the same footing and exploited the markets in the way their French, English, German, and Italian competitors, who are constantly sending representatives and salesmen to visit the trade, solicit orders and supply demands.

In a word, it would be necessary to have an agency in this country from which orders could not only be supplied promptly, but where the motors could be seen and their merits demonstrated.

Consul Henderson L. Spahr furnishes the following information concerning the probable market in Breslau for American automobiles and motor boats:

Breslau ought to be as good a field for the sale of American automobiles as other German cities, and the fact that a million people there is a large wealthy class. The streets, wide enough for traffic, are well paved, and excellent roads radiate in all directions. There is strong competition, however, and success will depend on prices and methods. In addition to the pleasure cars, a number of taximeter automobiles are in use and many business wagons.

Besides the police boat, there are two motor launches on the river. The Oder is well adapted for such craft. The river commerce is carried on by flatboats, tugs, and barges.

### Motor Boats as Life Savers.

Consul Maxwell Blake, of Dunfermline, says concerning the various uses to which motor boats are applied in Scotland:

The motor boat is gradually gaining in favor along the Scottish firths, as was recently indicated by the proposal of a lifeboat institution to place in commission a motor lifeboat at Broughty Ferry on the Firth of Tay. Considering the importance and difficulties attending the rescue of human life at sea, the fact that a motor lifeboat has been decided on for such work is the most practical kind of an endorsement of the merits of the marine combustion engine.

Not long ago the Scottish Marine Motor Club was organized, and is now actively engaged in exploiting the motor boat for river and inland lake pleasure and sport, and reliability trials have been instituted toward publically demonstrating the utility, economy, and reliability of the motor boat under any and all conditions. On July 17 to 20 the first official trials were held by the organization, and both medals and certificates of performance was awarded and issued for the fastest boat, on M. M. A. rating, as well as to the most economical boat, irrespective of its class. The Scotch makers of engines are putting forth special efforts this season, owing to the growing English competition.

From trustworthy sources I understand that there are not at the present time probably more than 50 motor boats in all Scotland, which is surprisingly few when one considers the splendid opportunities for their use along the numerous estuaries, almost innumerable canals, and picturesque inland lakes, which annually attract a great influx of tourists and sportsmen.

The Dunfermline consular district extends along the Firth of Forth for a distance of about fifty miles, but this particular region of water front is less adapted to motor-boat traffic than some other more favorably sheltered situations, especially along the west coast. This district is therefore hardly a proper one in which to establish a distributing center, although agencies could be opened at the following places: Aberdeen, Kirkcaldy, Burntisland, Kinghorn, Stirling, and Alloa. Not much, however, could be promised in these places in comparison with opportunities along the west coast.

### Motor Boats in Brazil.

Consul General George E. Anderson thinks Americans should sell motor boats in Rio Janeiro. He says:

While the general condition of the trade in motors and motor boats in Rio de Janeiro is not very promising, reflecting in a way conditions of trade generally, the record of the past year in the trade has been somewhat more satisfactory to the United States than previous years. The imports of motor boats from the United States are still very irregular, and it may be said that there is no regular trade in them, but there is also true of boats from other countries. Importers in Brazil are commencing to appreciate the possibilities

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ability, will get the field so good as under normal conditions. It is hoped, however, that present conditions will soon improve.

The demand here seems to be more largely for boats using crude or refined petroleum as fuel, and those in use here are principally of this character. Four or five firms in this city have engines using crude petroleum and refined kerosene, and a Monteria merchant has a petroleum boat, which he uses for passenger service on the Sinn.

Two American companies use open sea and river gasoline boats in connection with their logging camps, where they are getting out cedar and mahogany. The master mechanic of the Cartagena railroad has gasoline boats here, as well as a "motor automobile," using gasoline. The other gasoline boats which have been brought here have proved very unsatisfactory, perhaps from lack of knowledge of their intricate machinery, as well as from the difficulty of getting gasoline and batteries for supplying these boats. These two latter difficulties are encountered by all owners of gasoline motors here, as gasoline is very expensive, and but few opportunities offer for its importation. Extra batteries are not on sale here and must be brought from abroad. Gasoline pays a high tariff duty.

Crude petroleum is easily imported, and is kept constantly on sale, enjoying a heavy differential tariff over both gasoline and refined kerosene. This fact and the greater simplicity of the petroleum motor make this style of motor far more satisfactory in and greater demand. The boats of this class in use here seem to be giving excellent satisfaction.

In this line of trade, as well as in many others, traveling salesmen, speaking Spanish, could accomplish a great deal more in a few days of personal effort than can be done with catalogues. If the latter are to be sent, they should be in the language of the country.

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